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HASINA POISED TO RETAIN POWER IN TODAY'S BANGLADESH ELECTION

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to win a fourth straight term in Bangladesh general elections today amid an Oppn call for strike

OPPOSITION LEADER UNDER HOUSE ARREST

The main opposition, Bangladesh Nationalist Party, of former premier Khaleda Zia, who is under house arrest as a convict of graft charges, on Saturday began a 48-hour nationwide strike against the government amidst sporadic violence. About 27 political parties are contesting the elections, including the opposition Jatiya Party | P9, P11

100 GLOBAL OBSERVERS TO MONITOR POLLS

- As many as 100 observers from across the world, including three from India, will be scrutinising the polls. Amid the possibility of unrest, 700 Rapid Action Battalion teams have been deputed on election duty
- Voting for the 12th general elections will start at 8 am and end at 5 pm. The results are expected to start flowing in early from January 8

119.6 million

ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE, ACCORDING TO THE ELECTION COMMISSION

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

COSTLY SPAT

Truck kills 4 of 8 people arguing on road over mishap

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kundgol

FOUR people died on the spot when a speeding truck ran over them at Belligatti village in Kundgol taluk on Saturday morning. One person, who was injured in the accident, is under treatment.

They were busy arguing on the road after the cars in which they were travelling met with a minor accident, when the truck ran over them. The deceased have been identified as Chandan Gowda, 39, Manikant, 26, and Pavan, 23, of Arkalgud in Hassan district, and Harish Kumar, 40, an engineer from Bengaluru. Five people were in the Goa-bound car from Hassan and three in the other car proceeding towards Shirdi from Bengaluru. After getting down from their cars, they began blaming each other for the accident when the truck from Tamil Nadu, which was proceeding to Mumbai, ran over them. The police have taken the truck driver into custody. Overspeeding and poor visibility due to fog might have caused the accident, said the police.

Minister Santosh Lad and SP Gopal Byakod visited the spot.

EXPRESS READ

Poojari walks out of jail, says arrest 'conspiracy' by police

HUBBALLI: Hindu activist Srikant Poojari, who was arrested by the Hubballi police and got bail on Friday, walked out of jail on Saturday evening. After coming out of jail, Poojari stated that he was arrested for being a Bajrang Dal activist and it was a conspiracy by the police | P4

Inspect emergency exits of Boeing 737-8 Max, airlines told

NEW DELHI: Aviation watchdog DGCA on Saturday directed domestic airlines to immediately carry out inspection of emergency exits of all Boeing 737-8 Max planes in their fleets as an "abundant precautionary measure" in the wake of the Alaska Airlines incident.

Day after attack, suo motu police case against ED

Agency officers attacked at Bongaon as well; ex-head of civic body arrested in ration scam

PRANAB MONDAL @Kolkata

A day after the horrific attacks on Enforcement Directorate (ED) officers when they raided the house of Trinamool Congress leader Shahjahan Sheikh in North 24 Parganas in a ration scam case, both sides filed police complaints against each other.

Besides, the police lodged a suo motu case against the ED officers, charging them with molestation, forcible entrance and theft. Another FIR lodged on the basis of a complaint from the caretaker of Shahjahan's house charged the agency's officers with attempted break in without any warrant.

Shahjahan Sheikh

For its part, the ED e-mailed its complaint to the director general of police and superintendent of Basirhat police district, making serious charges, including attempt to murder against the attackers and its perpetrators. However, no one was arrested in connection with the attack on the ED officers.

Parallelly, Union Home minister Amit Shah is understood to have sought a report from West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose on Friday's attack. Though Bose summoned the state chief secretary and the director general of police to Raj Bhavan on Friday, both failed to turn up even a day after the incident.

Late on Friday night, another set of ED officers faced a similar attack from Trinamool supporters while arresting former chairman of Bongaon civic body Shankar Adhya in the same ration scam. Adhya's followers surrounded the sleuths and smashed the rear windshield of one of its vehicles. Fortunately, none of the ED officers was injured.

"A group of Adhya's followers attacked us when we were taking him out of his Bongaon residence. The central police personnel had to lathicharge the crowd," said an ED officer.

Former food and supplies minister Jyotipriya Mallick was among the first to be arrested in the ₹2,000 crore scam on October 27. The agency also searched Adhya's in-laws' house in the same area and recovered ₹8 lakh cash and incriminating evidence. "Adhya was a close aide of Mallick. We found clinching evidence showing his direct involvement in the scam," said the officer.

India gets bigger halo as Aditya reaches its final Sun study orbit

Artistic impression of Aditya in orbit | ISRO

CONTINUOUS VIEWING

From the L1 point, Aditya has the advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation or eclipses, ISRO scientists said. It will help observe solar activities and their effects in real time

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

IN its maiden solar mission, ISRO's Aditya-L1 successfully injected itself into its final orbit on Saturday around 4 pm.

Aditya-L1 performed its final and crucial manoeuvre to reach its destination, Lagrange Point 1 (L-1), achieving another milestone for India and its space aspirations. ISRO achieved this with great precision and at a frugal cost.

"Halo-Orbit Insertion (HOI) of its solar observatory spacecraft, Aditya-L1, was accomplished at 16.00 Hrs (approx) on January 6, 2024 (IST). The final phase of the manoeuvre involved the firing of control engines for a short duration," ISRO said in a statement.

The insertion of Aditya-L1 in the halo orbit presented a critical mission phase, which demanded precise navigation and control. A successful insertion further involved constant monitoring along with the adjustment of the spacecraft's speed and position by using onboard thrusters. P10

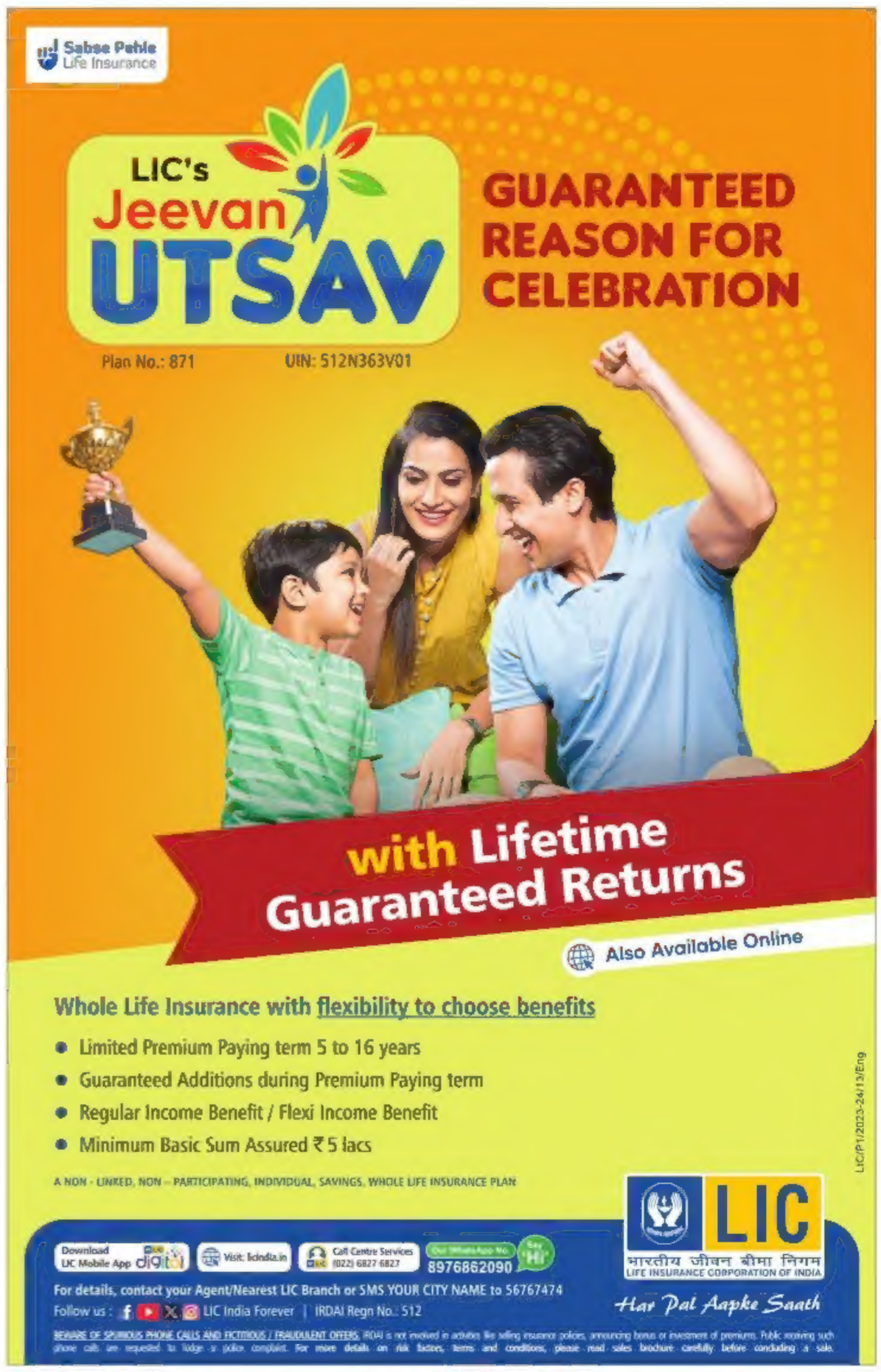
Timing their bundle of joy with consecration

RAMASHANKAR @Patna

RIYA Choudhary (name changed) is a first-time expectant mother in Patna whose due date falls on January 24. However, she, like many other pregnant women in Bihar's capital, has requested her doctor at the Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) to advance the date to January 22 so that it coincides with the consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

"I want to deliver my baby at the time when the consecration ceremony of Ram temple is held in Ayodhya," she said. She is not alone. More than 50 soon-to-be mothers and their family members have in recent days approached doctors at PMCH and other hospitals in Patna with requests to either advance the due date or postpone it so that the baby can be born on the auspicious day.

Kalpana Kumari (name changed) is also looking forward to giving birth on the auspicious day. "The *shubh muhurt* (auspicious period) has been finalised by my in-laws," she said. Her doctor, a noted gynaecologist at a private hospital in Patna, had fixed January 25 as her due date. However, her in-laws requested the doctor to do the surgery on January 22.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